(c) whether Government would consider conducting graduate level courses like B.Tech. to widen the job opportunities of passing out students?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) At present, 4 Indian Institutes of Handloom Technology (IIHTs) at Varanasi, Salem, Guwahati and Jodhpur are functioning in the Central sector and 2 Institutes namely, Shri Pragada Kotaiah Memorial Indian Institute of Handloom Technology at Venkatagiri and Karnataka Handloom Technology Institute at Gadag are functioning in the State sector with an objective to provide technically qualified manpower, primarily to meet the requirement of the Handloom Sector. These IIHTs are conducting 3 years' Diploma Course in Handloom Technology. Besides, IIHT, Salem and Varanasi are also conducting 1½ years Post Diploma Course in Textile Chemistry.

(c) No, Sir.

Revival of weavers' co-operatives in Orissa

1635. SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the Orissa proposes to revive weavers' cooperatives in the State;

(b) whether the Centre proposes to provide financial and physical help for execution of the project;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) what is the action plan of the Centre to provide for national and international Designers, to give training to their traditional weavers to make their products attractive and competitive in the international market?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) The Government of Orissa has informed they are operating special OTS programme involving 226 Primary Weavers' Co-operative Societies (PWCS) in the State. By this scheme, the interest burden of PWCS for the period from 01.04.1998 to 31.03.2005 is to be waived by concerned Co-operative Banks and Orissa State Co-operative

Bank. Principal outstanding is to be cleared up by the PWCS within a year in four installments.

(b) and (c) No such proposal is under consideration of the Government of India.

(d) Under the Handloom Export Scheme, national and international designers of reputed institutions like National Institute of Design, National Institute of Fashion Technology etc. are associated with the project implementing agencies for development of innovative range of diversified handloom products. As a result of direct intervention of designers in such export projects assisted by the Government of India, innovative and competitive products are produced by the traditional weavers after getting trained by the designers as well as by Weavers Service Centres/Master Weavers. During the 10th Plan (till now), 57 such export projects have been assisted under the scheme and the designers associated with these projects are assisting the weavers in developing exportable handloom products.

Comprehensive package for development of textile industry

†1636. SHRI RAJNITI PRASAD: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are preparing a comprehensive package, including tax relief for the development of the textile industry;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government would take action, keeping in view the handloom weavers in rural areas, while formulating the said package, so that they can be provided relief?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) As part of its pre-Budget exercise, the Government revisits the duty structure in different sub-sectors of the textiles industry to ensure the availability of fabric and raw materials at competitive rates. The proposals for tax relief, if any, are then formulated and after discussions with stakeholders and the competitive authorities, they are finalised.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.